

REMARKS

The above amendments to the above-captioned application along with the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response to the Official Action dated September 20, 2004. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to give due reconsideration to this application, to indicate the allowability of the claims, and to pass this case to issue.

Status of the Claims

Claims 2-10 and 12 are under consideration in this application. Claims 1 and 11 are being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 2, 10 and 12 are being amended, as set forth above and in the attached marked-up presentation of the claim amendments, in order to more particularly define and distinctly claim Applicants' invention.

Additional Amendments

The claims are being amended to correct formal errors and/or to better disclose or describe the features of the present invention as claimed. Applicants hereby submit that no new matter is being introduced into the application through the submission of this response.

Allowed Subject Matters

Claims 2-10 and 12 would be allowed if they are rewritten in independent form to include limitations of the base claim and intervening claims. As claim 1 is being incorporated into claims 2 and 10 and claim 11 is being incorporated into claim 12, all existing claims are in condition for allowance.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 1 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) on the grounds of being anticipated by Bergen (US Patent No. 6,097,958). As claims 1 and 11 are being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, the rejection thus become moot.

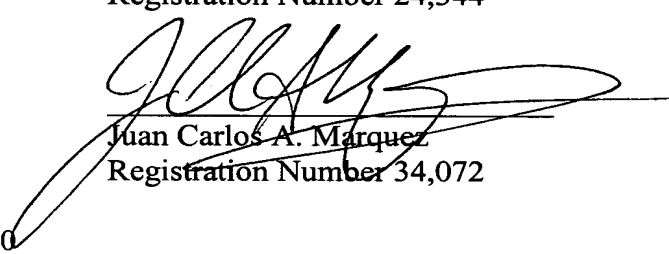
Conclusion

In view of all the above, clear and distinct differences as discussed exist between the present invention as now claimed and the prior art reference upon which the rejections in the Office Action rely, Applicant respectfully contends that the prior art references cannot anticipate the present invention or render the present invention obvious. Rather, the present invention as a whole is distinguishable, and thereby allowable over the prior art.

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully solicited. Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution and allowance of the above-captioned application, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative at the address and phone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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